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ABSTRACT

A study of the extent of the diplomatic and commercial assistance provided by the United States government to the Associated Press (AP) from 1912 to 1948 shows AP's manager, Kent Cooper, to be less a champion of the free press than an efficient captain of industry in expanding AP influence across the globe. Early in the twentieth century, British, French, and German news bureaus held a monopolistic cartel on the distribution of foreign news throughout Europe. With presidential and State Department aid, the AP moved beyond United States borders first to South America, then to the Far East, by means of Navy broadcasts. In 1934, AP declared complete independence and gained the right to send news anywhere. In the years during and following World War II, Cooper launched a successful free press campaign, and was effective in convincing Congress and other governmental officials of the virtue of and necessity for the United States' fighting for the free flow of information worldwide at international meetings. Critics claimed that Cooper's campaign was a smokescreen for expanding AP's commercial interest on the ruins of the European continent. Ultimately, Cooper did in fact spread the AP across the globe, with the help of government assistance, creating a news cartel denounced today by Third World nations in the same way Cooper denounced the European news cartels in the 1930s and 1940s. (HTH)

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THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S ASSISTANCE TO THE AP'S WORLD-WIDE EXPANSION: 1912-1948

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ABSTRACT HISTORY DIVISION

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S ASSISTANCE TO THE
AP'S WORLD-WIDE EXPANSION: 1912-1948

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Kent Cooper, general manager of the Associated Press from 1925 to 1948, its period of world-wide expansion, has been the prominent advocate of the unhampered reporting of international news and the principle of governmental non-interference in the affairs of the press. However, Washington's support for the development of U.S. news agencies' overseas operations was evidenced in various documents.

This paper analyzes an apparent contradiction between Cooper, the crusader for unhampered flow of information world-wide, without government interference, and Cooper, the shrewd manager accepting or seeking Washington support for expanding AP's operations abroad. It poses the question, "What was the extent and nature of the U.S. government diplomatic and commercial assistance provided to the AP in its efforts to expand overseas?"

The study reveals that Cooper was a pragmatist rather than an idealist. He was less the herald of a "cause célèbre" than an efficient captain of industry. The principle of free exchange of news world-wide without government interference was not an end in itself but an effective and timely means toward Cooper's lifetime goal: the expansion of the AP all over the globe.

To support this conclusion the study relies chiefly on primary sources, including Cooper's books, annual volumes of the AP Managing Directors Associations and U.S. government documents such as the Department of State Bulletin, the Federal Register and numerous Hearings before Congressional committees.

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THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S ASSISTANCE TO THE AP'S WORLD-WIDE EXPANSION: 1912-1948

Introduction

The United States government policy for the media is shaped by the tradition of laissez faire. Both at home and abroad, this means primarily regulating to smooth the way for existing commercial media. The prevailing opinion is that government-subsidized or government-aided media cannot perform the enlightening task of telling the whole truth to the responsible citizen. The American media, unlike media in most countries, constitute the "Fourth Estate" by acting as the watchdog of the government.

The press associations, particularly the Associated Press, have been champions in promoting those ideas. Kent Cooper, the AP general manager from 1925 to 1948, has been the most prominent advocate of the principle of governmental non-interference in the affairs of the press. He was presiding over the destiny of the AP at its period of world-wide expansion. The federal government has long been favorable to the notion of media export and operation abroad. Washington support for the development of U.S. news agencies' overseas operations was evidenced in various pieces of legislation, which provided commercial and diplomatic assistance to the AP.

This paper will explore and document what appears to be a contradiction between Cooper, the crusader for unhampered flow of information world-wide, without government interference, and Cooper, the shrewd manager accepting or seeking Washington assistance for expanding AP's operations abroad. This research will attempt to answer the following question: What was the extent and nature of the U.S. government diplomatic and commercial assistance provided to the AP in its efforts to expand overseas in 1912-1948?

Methodology

The research is descriptive as well as analytical. It follows the chronology of the events, including Kent Cooper's contribution to the expansion of AP operations overseas. It also sheds light and articulates the ties between the U.S. government and the A.P.

The period covered by the study begins with the initial involvement of Cooper with the AP in 1912 and ends with Cooper's retirement in 1948, two years after the UN Declaration on Freedom of Information made reference to the free flow of information across borders, the achievement of Cooper's lifetime campaign.

The research relied chiefly on primary sources, including the three books written by Cooper,[1] the annual volumes of the AP Managing Directors Association and U.S. government documents, such as the Department of State Bulletin, the Federal Register and numerous Hearings before Congressional committees.

Review of literature

Olivier Boyd-Barrett, an expert on international news agencies, has noted that, surprisingly enough, little attention has been given to the development of these institutions and even less to the expansion of their international network of correspondents.[2] He has attempted to analyze the operations of these news agencies in relation to the development of U.S. trading and banking system, and to the conduct of the U.S. foreign policy. However, he stopped short of clarifying the symbiotic relationship between these different entities.

Jeremy Tunstall, the British scholar, has documented the general tendency for American commercial media and the U.S. government agencies to help each other.[3] The media, in the eyes of the Commerce Department, have the advantage of providing a shop window for other goods, worldwide. Tunstall addresses the

role of the U.S. media in the Washington government's overall strategy for penetrating foreign markets and, therefore, challenging the European supremacy in the 1940s. He did not address specifically the question of the government support to the AP news agency.

Herbert Schiller developed the thesis of U.S. media imperialism.[4] He seems to go so far as to suggest the existence of a conspiracy led by the American government with the help of the media, an integral component of the "military-industrial complex." He mentions the active role played by the news agencies in this international strategy, referring to State Department, Commerce Department, and Congressional literature.

The reviewed literature reveals a gap in historical-critical research on the early days of American news agencies' world-wide expansion. The domain of relationship between those agencies and the U.S. governments' foreign policy is a territory still unexplored. This study attempts to map it.

The story

In the first decade of the twentieth century, important sectors of the U.S. domestic industry chafed impatiently at being excluded from vast regions pre-empted by the still-forceful British and French empires, i.e., the British global imperial preference that tied together that colonial system's network of dependencies and sealed them off from possible commercial penetration by other entrepreneurs. The decisive role played by the British world-wide communication network which held the colonial system together, promoted its advantages, and insulated it from external assault, has not escaped attention in the United States.[5]

The tardiness of the AP in expanding overseas was due primarily to an old agreement between the major news-gathering organizations of the world in 1893.

Under this pact Reuters had Great Britain, her colonies, Egypt, Turkey, China and the countries within Britain's sphere of influence. The Havas agency of Paris took for its territory France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Central and South America. The German Wolff bureau was given jurisdiction over the Reich, Scandinavian countries, Holland, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and the Balkans. The AP had the United States.[6]

The news of the United States that was collected by the AP was distributed abroad by foreign news agencies. Lacking the right to sell its foreign news abroad, AP could not build the kind of foreign service it eventually achieved. Not until 1934 would this restrictive arrangement be finally broken down by the AP management.[7]

The first contacts between the U.S. government and the AP in relation to the international situation occurred under the chairmanship of Melville Stone, the first director of the modern AP of New York. The State Department approached Stone and expressed its desire to assist the AP in establishing bureaus in all parts of the world and particularly in Latin America, Stone's first market target.[8] The State Department, concerned over the influence wielded by the German propaganda service in the mid-1910s, urged the AP to give the nation's Latin American neighbors factual news both about the war and the United States. Kent Cooper, at this time Melville Stone's assistant, foresaw the possibility of governmental aid in AP's attempt to penetrate the South American market.[9]

Cooper became acquainted with Colonel George L. House, President Wilson's assistant, before he went to South America the first time. Cooper had then told House about the project of opening up the southern continent for news dissemination and American interests. Cooper found him "a listener who not only was interested but was anxious to help."[10]

A point that favored the AP was the fact that while Havas, the French news agency, had to pay 25 cents a word for having its news sent from London or Paris to Buenos Aires, at the behest of the State Department the American-owned cable from New York was beginning to offer reduced rates from New York to Buenos Aires for American clients only.[11]

The AP's relationship with the U.S. government with regard to South America had been fruitful for more than two decades. In 1941, Nelson Rockefeller, President Roosevelt-appointed as Coordinator of Inter-American Affairs, went so far as to ask Cooper to release him some men who had long been trained by the AP in its Latin-American services. After consultation with the AP board of directors, Cooper turned down the request "with apology." The AP has become strong enough to do so. Its credibility would have been hurt by this deal.[12]

On the European front, Cooper was active as well. He told Colonel House the whole story of how the AP with the great European news agencies, headed principally by Reuters of London, had confined AP activities to the United States. Cooper asked him if he knew whether anything respecting freedom of the press and freedom of international news exchange was being incorporated in the 1919 Versailles Peace Treaty. An article published in the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, in 1917, had exercised a profound influence in government as well as press circles. Its author, Admiral Williams L. Rodgers, talked about the news as "a commercial article itself and as a commercial agency, and as a political agency at the disposal of the government for the maintenance and advancement of our national prosperity."[13] Having the postwar Europe in mind, Cooper was particularly interested by the Admiral's propositions:

> The same ideas which have led to the establishment of the Interstate Commerce Commission in the interest of the people at large, seems to call for some help to the national press associations and news agencies in regard to international affairs as desirable for the same reasons. The

immediate question before us is how such aid may be exerted, bearing in mind that the policy of the United States is to make use of foreign commerce for the greater prosperity of the individual citizens of the republic. We must no more disarm our national news system than our war system. Both are necessary to the protection of our commercial interests at home and abroad.[14]

All the European news agencies tentacles into Central Europe had been broken by the war. Cooper wondered what was going to happen. In the Paris peace negotiations, President Wilson tried to show how the world could be "made safe for democracy" through a league of nations that would enforce freedom to exchange information world-wide. Walter S. Rogers, the communication expert of the United States Commission to Negotiate the Peace who wholeheartedly endorsed Cooper's fight to open up markets for the AP and break the European cartel, advocated the creation of adequate facilities of communication of information throughout the world, saying in a statement prepared for the President's consideration:

> The various people of the world must become acquainted with one another, if there is to be a permanent peace of a successful League of Nations. This cannot be effectuated by mere treaty stipulation. Facilities must be provided which will stimulate the flow of information around the world.[15]

In the Far East, the AP took the initiative. In 1919, Mr. McClatchy, an AP director, made a trip to Japan, Korea, China and the Philippines. On his return, he went before Congress and declared that foreign control (Reuters) of news channels was prejudicing American interests in the Western Pacific. This resulted in Congress directing the Navy to open its transpacific radio circuits to news at a rate low enough to permit competition with British and Japanese transmission charges.[16]

Because the rates were so high between the Far East and the United States, the volume of news exchanged was somewhat restricted. The volume of transactions depended upon the presence or absence of adequate communication services at rates reasonable to American news agencies. President Harding enunciated

the policy of the American government in his message to Congress, April 12, 1921:

> The government of the United States proposes to encourage the extension of communication facilities in connection with the enterprises under the control of its various departments, the Navy and the Commerce Departments in particular, and those of private cable, radio, telegraph, to be used by press associations and news agencies...[17]

Beginning in 1921, dispatches from the United States to newspapers in Honolulu or Manila could be sent by the U.S. Navy radio. The rate was 6 cents a word to newspapers in Manila, 3 cents a word to those in Honolulu. But that did not link the United States directly with China or Japan. It was necessary to pay additional cable or wireless tolls between Manila and Shanghai or Tokyo. Although Melville Stone retired in April 1921, under Cooper's pressing appeals he appeared before the Senate Committee on Interstate Communication in November 1922 emphasizing the mutual benefit for the Department of Commerce to transmit information from China and Japan via the Navy radio facilities and for the AP to open bureaus in these territories.[18] Beginning that year, the Navy radio carried eastbound dispatches, linking Manila with San Francisco, and correspondents in China or Japan could radio or cable their messages to Manila for relay. A twenty-year agreement was entered into between the Chinese Minister of Communications and an American company, the Federal Telegraph Company, providing for the construction and operation of a high-power radio capable of communication with the United States.

The American government had given diplomatic support to the AP in its attempt to secure preferential rate for its transmission of news dispatches to its members.[19] Practically all news services of agencies were handled by the Naval Communication Service. The influential Admiral Rodgers noted:

> This service is most satisfactory to the press, and I have heard many complimentary expressions from them about it. Government was accepted as a great political and patriotic gain, so now radio and

cable control is internationally necessary for the national prosperity of the United States in its inevitable economic conflicts with rival business interests of other states.[20]

Also in 1922, Congress granted a renewal of the press privilege of using the Navy radio, that renewal to continue until June 1925. The press authority was renewed again in 1925, and once more to 1927. In 1929, RCA contested the use of the Navy radio by the press and took the relay since then.[21]

Cooper responded to criticism that by applying preferential tariffs to wire services the government was the heaviest financial backer of the news organization. His rationale was that government money, which reduced the costs of the services to the member newspapers, was subsidizing the newspapers, not the news agency.[22]

The 1928 Radio Convention did not provide for membership of private companies in the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), but it provided for their participation in the work of the Union. Private companies sent representatives to the international Radio Conference to act in an advisory capacity and to prepare drafts. An observer said: "The private companies under the leadership of the AP general manager Mr. Cooper, wrote it."[23]

Wire services and commercial companies operating communications facilities demanded safeguards for their freedom. Committees were created in the Department of War, Navy, and Commerce, which worked on the questions to be codified. The results were submitted in proposals to the International Bureau of the ITU. Colonel Davis of the Radio Corporation of America and Kent Cooper of the AP commended the diverse government agencies for having recognized the mutual interests of helping wire services in the expansion of their operations world-wide.[24]

The situation before the passage of the Communication Act of 1934 was briefly this: The Interstate Commerce Commission had jurisdiction over the

rates and practices of wire and wireless companies engaged in interstate or foreign communication. The executive branch of the federal government had jurisdiction over the granting of licenses for the landing of cables on the shores of the United States. The Federal Radio Commission had authority to license and to regulate the operations, but not the rates and charges, of radio communication companies engaged in interstate and foreign communication. The ICC, an independent unit of the government apparatus, poorly staffed, was at the mercy of the pressures and demands emanating from press associations and wire services. The ICC, being quite weak, was rather sympathetic to this intense lobbying. Most of its energy was directed to domestic communication.[25]

With respect to rates and regulations, the FRC recommended a provision requiring that as a condition to its consent of consolidation the cable companies should agree that no charges may be increased without prior consent of the Commission. Such provision, not necessary with respect to domestic communication, was designed to prevent consolidated telegraph companies from rising rates and other taxes applied to news agencies operating abroad. The Commission believed that lower rate would strengthen the position of international news agencies in their attempt to break the monopoly of the European cartel, and consequently would open the door to North American trade and diplomacy.[26]

AP had joined the European cartel in 1893 because it was an extremely convenient mode of foreign news collection, conserving the agency's resources for its primary objective, to satisfy the appetites of its domestic members for domestic news, while giving it an initial advantage in the competition with its domestic rival, United Press. These advantages were not permanent. The U.S. rapidly developed its own cable network across the globe and the cost of foreign news gathering came to seem less onerous. The domestic competition,

UP, having to rely solely on its own foreign network of correspondents argue that it was truly independent editorially whereas AP, was not. For this reason, AP had to engage in its own reporting of overseas events, but was unable to recoup foreign news gathering costs by foreign sales. AP's main complaints against the cartel, then, were that it kept it out of foreign markets, and that the European agencies could present American news disparagingly if they wished.[27]

AP's unhappiness was both commercial and diplomatic. It began to recognize that in a free trade situation it would do well overseas. And one way to exploit this situation was to stress how the cartel system worked against the diplomatic interests of the United States. To receive the news of the other agencies, the American agency had to pay a fee. In addition, it had to concede to Reuters, Havas, and Wolff the exclusive right to send AP news of the United States to the rest of the world. The AP could send no news for publication outside the North American continent.

In 1934, AP unilaterally broke the 1893 agreement. It was a declaration of complete independence. The American agency continued to exchange its domestic news with the other agencies but gained the right to send news everywhere. "It became my opportunity to direct the hardest blow struck at the world news cartel," Cooper said.[28]

AP's role in breaking down the oligopolistic system first occurred nearer to home than Europe. AP decided to approach Havas and negotiate for the limited entry to the French agency's traditional South American market. Havas agreed in exchange for financial compensation. AP accepted these conditions because it did not want a complete break from the cartel. It still needed the cartel's supply of news of other parts of the world, especially those European countries. While in favor of breaking with the cartel, AP had no objection to signing up deals with other agencies.[29] In 1938, AP had bureaus in 13 countries, mostly in Central and South America.

Cooper read a letter from Arthur H. Sulzberger, the New York Times publisher and an AP director, advocating the desirability of a free flow of news after the war and inquiring whether the executive director should act in that direction by taking it up with the State Department. Cooper underlined to Secretary of State Cordell Hull "the imperative necessity to incorporate in the international agreement to be made after the war stipulations regarding freedom of the press throughout the world and equal access by all to the news and the means of transmitting it."[30]

It was expected that Reuters' and Havas' operations in the respective colonial markets, weakened or destroyed after the war, could be easily disposed of. Cooper reported that Secretary Hull had expressed much interest in his suggestion and had requested an elaboration. The AP board of directors commended the action and expressed the desire that Mr. Cooper continue with it.[31] It wrote:

> Since it was the hope of the pro-propagandists to put the government in the news dissemination business permanently, it seems desirable to point out the fact, in anticipation of the war's ultimate end, the weakening of the European news cartel, that the peace treaties should assure purification and extension of international news exchange by private interests. It also seems desirable that the vanquished should accept the principle of press freedom.[32]

Consequently, fifteen months after America declared war, Cooper asked the American newspapers to sponsor a movement to advance the idea of other countries establishing free press and taking news agencies away from the government. "Our democratic government may be willing to assist us in that great campaign."[33]

In February 1943, the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) adopted a resolution calling for a "world guarantee of freedom of the press." In September, various worded resolutions were offered in the U.S. Senate by Senators Connaly and Taft, and in the House by Congressmen Bloom and Fulbright.

Out of this soil grew Senate concurrent resolution 53 asserting "a world-wide right of exchange of news...without discrimination...protected by international compact." This resolution was unanimously adopted by both chambers on September 21, 1944. The ASNE invited the U.S. government to join in reciprocal declarations.

The economic aspects of the free-flow-of-information policy certainly were no secret, though the media neither dwelt on the self-serving nature of its widely proclained principle nor made the implications of the policy explicit to the public. Press associations and publishers organized a remarkable political campaign to elevate the issue of free flow of information to the highest level of national and international principle. This served a pair of objectives. It rallied public opinion to the support of a commercial goal expressed as an ethical imperative. Simultaneously, it provided a highly effective ideological club against the Soviet Union and its newly created neighboring zone of anticapitalist influence.[34]

Of course, British power was not unaware of American interest in these matters. The influential Economist reacted tartly to Cooper's expanding campaign, in late 1944, for the free flow of information:

> The nuge financial resources of the American agencies might enable them to dominate the world....(Cooper), like most big business executives, experiences a peculiar moral glow in finding that his idea of freedom coincides with his commercial advantage... Democracy does not necessarily mean making the whole world safe for the AP.[35]

In 1945, the fighting war ended. Cooper wrote to the newly-elected President Truman: "It would be effective for you definitely to announce that the United States will require inclusion of press freedom in the peace treaty. That will take care of the aggressor nations."[36] Two weeks later, General MacArthur in Tokyo issued a five-point directive "to further encourage liberal tendencies in Japan." MacArthur ended all barriers to the collection and

distribution of news and stripped the Domei news agency, owned by the Jananese government, of its monopolistic privileges. This was exactly what had been asked of President Truman. Cooper was proud of his success.[37]

In September 1945, Secretary Hull issued a statement declaring:

> I have consistently supported the cause of freedom of news and I would support any practical measure to give international recognition to the principle.[38]

In December, Hull's successor, Secretary of State Stettinius added: "I earnestly hope it will be possible to have this subject brought up at the United Nations Conference when it meets."[39] Meanwhile, with considerable enthusiasm and drive, the State Department was studying the practicability of getting an international agreement guaranteeing full and equal access to the news.

Kent Cooper was effective in convincing Congress and other government officials of the virtue and necessity for the United States to fight for the free flow of information world-wide at international meetings. He excelled in drawing a dark picture of the state-controlled, state-aided and state-subsidized press all over the world. He felt the American government had a moral obligation to promote by all means the ideals of free and independent press and news exchanges. It was an especially propitious time to extol the virtues of unrestricted movement of information. The depredations of the Nazi occupation had traumatized Europe and a good part of the rest of the world. Freedom of information was the highly desirable and legitimate aspiration of occupied nations and peoples. And it was relatively easy to confuse truly national needs with private business objectives.[40]

Cooper emphasized how the monopoly of the European news agencies over the possessions of their governments prevented the advancement of durable peace and understanding among the nations of the globe. He also underlined the

urgency for the American government to "make things easier for the press associations and the AP in particular to break the cartel established by Reuters, Havas and Wolff." The expansion of American news agencies abroad would profit, on the long run, "all sectors" of the American community.[41]

Critics said that by undertaking his "freedom of press" campaign, Cooper was mainly interested in expanding AP commercial interests on the ruins of the European continent. He was expecting to take advantage of the American reconstruction aid, the 1946 Marshall Plan, and consequently he would have accepted indirectly the government assistance.[42] Cooper defended himself in his book The Right to Know: "No mention was made in my letter (to the ASNE) of help from the United States government, financial or otherwise, as I never had this in mind. I did have hope of American insistence upon free press stipulation in the treaties with the defeated nations."[43]

During World War II, AP news was made available free to the Information Division of the U.S. Department of State, which may be the reason of the special treatment provided to AP correspondents by the Army. Not only assignment of staff men to the war zone had been substantially increased during 1942, but also the utmost cooperation by both Army and Navy authorities had facilitated tasks of staff accreditation, transportation and cooperation, both at home and abroad.[44] Noel Macy, Assistant Chief of the International Information Division of the Department of State, appeared before the board of the AP to request continued availability of the news report by the IID for use in its short-wave voice broadcasting and also for use in newspapers and radio in military-occupied areas of the world. The IID had been given notice that the wartime availability of the AP news for such purposes would be discontinued on December 31, 1945. The board unanimously authorized the executive director to

continue the availability.[45] It should be remembered that in May 1942 a resolution had been adopted by the AP that said:

> The Associated Press holds that news disseminated by non-governmental news agencies is essential to the highest development of mankind.... It holds that government cannot engage in newscasting without creating the fear of propaganda which necessarily would reflect upon the objectivity of the news services from which such newscasts are prepared.[46]

AP felt it could not refuse the availability of news to the State Department since it was asking the same Department to back the ASNE's "freedom of information" proposition at the United Nations.

Washington recognized the postwar importance of freer communications as a stimulant to the exchange of goods and ideas. James Lawrence Fly, chairman of the Federal Communications Commission during World War II, drew attention to the subject:

> Among the artificial restraints to the free development of commerce throughout the world, none is more irksome and less justifiable than the control of communication facilities by one country with preferential services and rates.[47]

"It was always said in the old days, reminded Sir Arthur Willert in 1938, that trade followed the flag. In these days it is becoming more and more obvious that trade follows the news."

President Truman, reporting to Congress on the United Nations, said: "The United States believes that freedom of information must be realized on a far wider basis than exists in the world today if the United Nations is to succeed."[48] Assistant Secretary of State William Benton noted:

> Here from the President is the culmination of the American press campaign led by Kent Cooper, the eloquent advocate of the Associated Press. However, the responsibility for leadership falls primarily upon the Department of State. We seek to encourage the development of transport and communication facilities through freedom for the energy and skill of competitive private business enterprises. With this principle in mind, we seek to support the legitimate expansion of communication facilities throughout the world by citizens of the United States. In Europe, we have actively participated to the rehabilitation of the war-torn transport and communication systems of that continent. Our interests are more, however, than simply

> that implied by our position as occupying power in Europe. The restoration of conditions which permit the free exchange of news, corollary to the revival of trading relations, is necessary to a prosperous America. We seek to assure the development of American telecommunication facilities to provide direct services wherever the traffic is of sufficient importance to our interests to warrant such services.[49]

Benton made public on September 1947 the draft of a suggested international agreement on freedom of information. The draft was a result of an informal assignment undertaken by the Chicago Times editor, Richard J. Finnegan, at Benton's request to formulate an agreement which would reflect prevalent thinking in press, radio and wire services, and would express principles which private industry would like to see written into international conventions.[50]

One reason why American news agencies prospered in foreign lands after the Second World War was that the war released great geographical areas from domination by European governments and government-subsidized agencies. European commercial interests also reached deeply into the politics and economy of many countries which are now politically free or becoming so. In 1938, AP had bureaus in thirteen countries. During 1945, AP services were established in Sweden, Italy, France, India, Switzerland, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Holland, Norway, the Philippines, China, Japan, the Malayan States, Korea, Turkey, Egypt, Greece, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Those countries were precisely Reuters' and Havas' territories at the time of British and French colonial domination. In 1948, AP opened bureaus in forty-four countries.[51]

Newspapers in the foreign field naturally believed that the wholly unexpected simultaneous efforts of American government and private news agencies were backed by government money. As a matter of fact, the U.S. government did set up broadcasting facilities for propaganda purposes. Subsidy of newspapers in Europe was indeed recommended to and apparently legalized by the United States Congress and actually had occurred after America got into a foreign

propaganda war just before mid-century.[52] A special Congressional group that spent a few weeks in Europe investigating the effective infiltration of Communist news propaganda recommended that "funds should be made available where necessary to encourage the publication of American material by foreign press and facilitate the transmission of news by the American news agencies."[53] Cooper was overplaying the "evil effect of the Communist propaganda worldwide." Usually critical of government aid to the press in other countries, he welcomed the resolution that became a law in January 27, 1948. Section 702 states that "the Secretary of State shall authorize the transfer to other government agencies for expenditure in the United States and in other countries... any part of any appropriations available to the Department provided the activities come within the scope of this act."[54]

The United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information was held March 25 to April 21, 1948, in Geneva. Benton, chairman of the U.S. delegation to the conference, explained: "Our conference at Geneva, as was expected, is sharply divided... The free are thus face-to-face with those whose ideology drives them toward the destruction of freedom. We are there to do all that we can to reduce barriers to the flow of information among men and nations."[55] The executive director of the AP had said: "This control of international news exchange seemed to me to cry out for correction through the application of a practical idealism in international news relations."[56] This call had obviously been heard. The conference represented in the eyes of the U.S. observers a victory for Cooper's objectives. In the final resolution, reference was made for the first time to the "free flow of information across borders."[57] However, the Economist of London, covering the UN General Assembly, noted:

> It was the impression of most delegations that the Americans wanted to secure for their news agencies that general freedom of the market for the most efficient which has been the object of all their initiatives in commercial policy--that they regard freedom of information as an extension of the Charter of the International Trade Organization rather than as a special and important subject of its own."[58]

Conclusion

In October 1948, the Librarian of Congress issued an index of documents on the subject. A footnote on page 15 reads: "Mr. Cooper is generally acknowledged to have started the crusade for unhampered reporting of international news, free from government interference, as a method of preventing war and in favor of world-wide freedom of information, and led to the ASNE campaign."[59]

Hugh Baillie, UP president from 1935 to 1955, wrote in Business Week:

> The campaign for world-wide freedom of the press turns out to be a slick operation by Kent Cooper. The sleuthing journalist's story would reveal that Kent Cooper has in mind certain advantages for his AP in the event that something comes of world-wide freedom of the press. It would observe that in the postwar world there may be great possibilities for the AP to expand its activities--particularly if the way is cleared by an international free-press doctrine.[60]

Cooper wanted to break the news monopoly but, in times past, the AP, far from opposing news cartels, had entered into monopolistic news-exchange arrangements with the very cartels he now denounced. For the history of mankind recalls that the ageless battle for liberty is also always a battle for private interest. Kent Cooper had been the chief organizer of the campaign for world-wide freedom of news exchange. He was fighting for the "mechanical" things, cable rates and wireless transmission. He was fighting, as this study has shown, with governmental assistance for the right to set up and expand freely competitive organizations for the gathering and distribution of a commodity more or less definable as "news." In times past, various great powers maintained various news monopolies as instrument of their national policy: Reuters for Great Britain, Havas for France, Wolff for Germany, Domei for Japan. These, more or less, resembled America's AP.

Cooper was a pragmatist rather than an idealist. He was less the herald of a "cause célèbre" than an efficient captain of industry. The principle of

free exchange of news world-wide without government interference was not an end in itself but an effective and timely means toward Cooper's lifetime goal: the expansion of the AP all over the globe.

An incursion into the present would ironically reveal that the complaints Cooper addressed to the European news cartel in the 1930s and 1940s are the very same voiced today by developing countries' news agencies against AP's world-wide monopoly.

Endnotes

[1]The books written by Kent Cooper are Barriers Down (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1942); The Right to Know (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1956); Kent Cooper and the Associated Press: An Autobiography (New York: Random House, 1959).

[2]Oliver Boyd-Barrett, The International News Agencies (London: Constable, 1980).

[3]Jeremy Tunstall, The Media are American (New York: NY University Press, 1977).

[4]Herbert I. Schiller, Mass Communications and American Empire (Boston: Beacon, 1971).

[5]Herbert I. Schiller, Crisis in International News, eds. Jim Richstad and Michael H. Anderson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), p. 163.

[6]Oliver Gramling, AP: The Story of News (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, Inc., 1940), p. 264.

[7]Ibid., p. 164.

[8]Department of State Bulletin 18 (August 6, 1917), p. 225.

[9]Gramling, AP: The Story of News, p. 275.

[10]Cooper, Barriers Down, p. 128.

[11]Melville E. Stone, Fifty Years, a Journalist (Toronto: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1922), p. 75.

[12]AP Managing Directors Association 42 (July 23, 1941), p. 32.

[13]Admiral William L. Rodgers, "Trade, News and Democracy," The Annals of the American Academy 105 (April 1917), p. 132.

[14]Ibid., p. 137.

[15]Department of State Bulletin 45 (Dec. 7, 1919), p. 387.

[16]U.S., Congress, Senate, Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations. 61st Cong., 1st sess., November 9, 1919, p. 13.

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[18]U.S., Congress, Senate, Hearings Before the Committee on Interstate Communication on S. 6, 64th Cong., 2nd sess., Dec. 6, 1922, p. 38.

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[20]Admiral William L. Rodgers, "Effect of Cable and Radio Control on News and Commerce," The Annals of the American Academy 112 (March 1924), p. 48.

[21]Robert W. Desmond, The Press and World Affairs (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1937), p. 198.

[22]APMDA 47 (June 3, 1946), p. 83.

[23]U.S., Congress, Senate, Hearings Before the Committee on Foreign Relations, 70th Cong., 1st sess., March 14, 1928, p. 122.

[24]U.S., Congress, Senate, The Radio Act, Hearings Before the Committee on Interstate Commerce, 71st Cong., 2nd sess., Feb. 2, 1929, p. 73.

[25]James M. Herring and Gerald C. Gross, Telecommunication, Economics and Regulation (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1936), p. 364.

[26]Ibid., p. 412.

[27]Cooper, Barriers Down, p. 102.

[28]Cooper, The Right to Know, p. 153.

[29]Boyd-Barrett, The International News Agencies, p. 200.

[30]APMDA 43 (Oct. 22, 1942), p. 46.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Cooper, The Right to Know, p. 155.

[33]Editor & Publisher 47 (Nov. 17, 1942), p. 25.

[34]Herbert I. Schiller, Communication and Cultural Domination (White Plains, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1976), pp. 29-30.

[35]Quoted in "Charter for a Free Press," Newsweek (December 11, 1944), p.88.

[36]Cooper, The Right to Know, p. 188.

[37]Ibid., p. 191.

[38]Department of State Bulletin 27 (Sept. 23, 1945), p. 421.

[39]Editor & Publisher 27 (Dec. 13, 1945), p. 17.

[40]Boyd Barrett, The International News Agencies, p. 538.

[41]Cooper, Kent Cooper and the Associated Press, p. 47.

[42]Ibid., p. 174.

[43]Cooper, The Right to Know, p. 213.

[44]APMDA 45 (Dec. 31, 1944), p. 58.

[45]APMDA 46 (Nov. 30, 1945), p. 83.

[46]APMDA 43 (May 17, 1952), p. 8.

[47]James L. Fly, "A Free Flow of News Must Link the Nations," Free World 8 (Aug. 1944), p. 165-6.

[48]U.S., President, Report, "The United Nations and America." Federal Register 18, No. 72, June 13, 1947), 2372-73.

[49]Department of State Bulletin 39 (June 22, 1947), p. 1241.

[50]Editor & Publisher 31 (Sept. 8, 1947), p. 2.

[51]Tunstall, The Media and American, p. 218.

[52]Boyd-Barrett, The International News Agencies, p. 271.

[53]U.S., Congress, House, Hearings before a Subcommittee of the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Communications, 79th Cong., 2nd sess., March 10, 1947, p. 52.

[54]Cooper, Kent Cooper and the Associated Press, p. 183.

[55]Department of State Bulletin 11 (April 18, 1948), p. 518-19.

[56]Cooper, The Right to Know, p. 201.

[57]Boyd-Barrett, The International News Agencies, p. 321.

[58]The Economist, May 4, 1948, p. 71.

[59]Boyd-Barrett, The International News Agencies, p. 72.

[60]Business Week, Aug. 4, 1948, p. 143.